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When one of the outstanding publishing organizations in the world, in collaboration with the University of Chicago, develops a single literary effort . . . at a cost of two million dollars . . . when 75 eminent scholars pool their talents and, almost religiously, work together on the project for eight years and when at last the completed program is greeted by critics as one of the outstanding literary achievements of our generation it becomes a venture which should be brought to the attention of every man and woman who enjoys creative thinking and fine writing.

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can you gain this knowledge subject by subject, bit by bit at your own pace . . . to apply the wisdom of the Great Authors to your personal thinking today. Through the SYNTOPICON and the GREAT BOOKS you get the full expression of their thoughts -- not digests or watered down interpretations.

Quite frankly, there's so much to tell you about GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD, the SYNTOPICON and all that this wealth of wisdom can mean to you, it's impossible to do more than give you a very brief glimpse in the short space of this letter and the enclosed brochure.

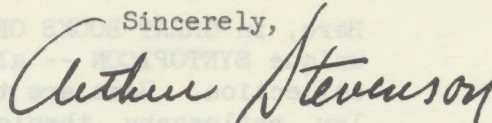
Handsome Booklet Offered FREE!

As I mentioned earlier, an attractive full-color booklet has been prepared that describes and pictures GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD and the SYNTOPICON in exciting full detail.

We want to send you a copy of this brochure absolutely free and without obligation -- along with information on how you can obtain this unique publishing program at a cost so reasonable you'll be pleasantly surprised.

To obtain your free copy, merely slip the attached certificate into the postage-free envelope and drop it in the mail. But do it today, before it slips your mind. It costs you nothing -- not even a postage stamp.

Sincerely,



Arthur Stevenson

AS/GB448 OPE

*an
imaginative
literary
venture
into the
sphere of
human ideas*



The Great
Ideas
A SYNTOPICON
I
Angel to
Love

The Great
Ideas
A SYNTOPICON
II
Man to
World



an invention which turned a literary dream into a reality

While in the process of writing one of his many books, Dr. Mortimer J. Adler, noted author and educator, turned to the well-thumbed books on his shelf: the great works of Aristotle, Plato, Machiavelli, Hobbes, the Federalist Papers and many more. And as he reread them, he was suddenly struck with a thought which has since become one of the greatest publishing feats of our generation.

For on a single page in Aristotle's *Politics*, he discovered three precious new points about a single subject, war and peace. As he reflected on his discovery, he recalled the many times he had read Aristotle over the years without even noticing these three important points. And the reason was obvious.

Never before had Dr. Adler gone to the *Politics* specifically asking himself the question, "What did Aristotle say about war and peace?" Always he had read Aristotle—in fact *all* of the great authors—with a view to what they had to say about everything in life.

So simple. And yet as he thought more about it, a fascinating idea crossed his mind:

If someone could read every truly great writing of our civilization—for the past thirty centuries—*asking every author all the basic questions which have confronted men in every age . . .*

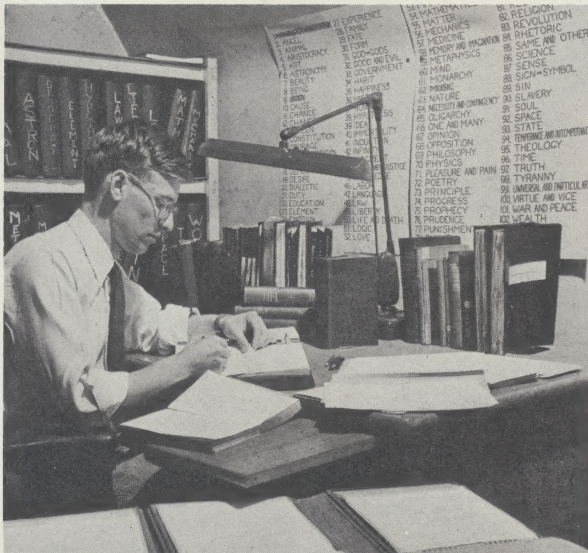
and, if he could then make note of the *exact passages wherein each author answers each question . . .*

then, *instantly*, anyone could trace the development of any idea—any topic—through 3,000 years of brilliant literature . . . could go to the great books and turn *immediately* to the pages and the very paragraphs that reveal the views of the authors on any question of interest.

A dream! A new kind of reference library which would operate in the realm of ideas as the dictionary does in the realm of language or the encyclopedia in the realm of fact. A way to bring history's greatest thinkers together—across time and space—in conversation on any single theme.

Obviously, this exciting project would require many minds to work together for many years. It would demand tremendous financial backing by men and organizations more interested in literary ventures than in profit. And it would exact devoted service from recognized authorities in every phase of knowledge. Almost inconceivable!





Yet eight years and \$2,000,000 later...

... came a literary achievement which *Life Magazine* called at the time "... a monumental intellectual task ..."

THE SYNTOPICON

and

GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD

With Dr. Robert Maynard Hutchins serving as editor of the **GREAT BOOKS** and Dr. Adler masterminding the creation of the **SYNTOPICON**, everyone connected with the project was driven with frightening energy.

For first, they had to classify and organize every imaginable thought, topic and question . . . and assign each to a major idea.

Then, select from 3,000 years of literature, those writings which were unquestionably great—which have contributed most to the development of Western tradition and progress.

And finally, they had to read, study, virtually chew and digest every word in these volumes to find *every reference* within them to each idea and topic . . . *every answer* to each question.

Bare statistics tell little, but, when they had finished, 75 educators, philosophers, novelists, scientists and poets had agreed on . . .

- 102 Great Ideas from Angel to World . . .
- 3,000 topics subordinate to the ideas . . .
- 443 works by 74 great authors from Homer to Freud!

They had . . .

- determined 163,000 exact references after making 900,000 reference decisions . . .
- written 102 comprehensive introductory essays, one for each Great Idea . . .
- created 102 extensive bibliographies of additional readings, one for each Great Idea.

Many of the works chosen for inclusion in the set were long out of print. Others, the works of Ptolemy, Copernicus and Kepler for example, had to be translated into English *for the first time*.

After 400,000 man-hours of selection, collection, organization and research, the SYNTOPICON and the GREAT BOOKS were published, greeted by critics and educators alike as one of the outstanding literary achievements of our generation. For here, in the words of the *New York Times*, were “. . . the basic writings of Western Civilization together with an orderly means of access to their wisdom.”

54 distinctive volumes

32,000 pages

24,000,000 words





...designed to be read

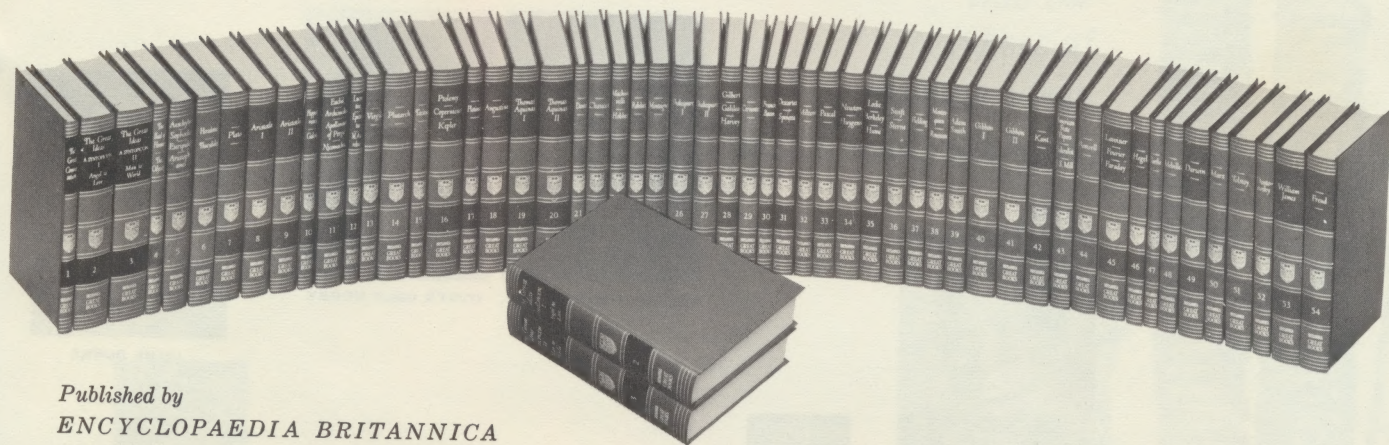
The entire library was placed in the capable hands of one of America's leading designers and typographers, Rudolph Ruzicka, whose name—for 25 years—has been synonymous with the design of beautiful books to be read.

Mr. Ruzicka gave each volume a format and typography appropriate to the works it contains—and brilliantly constructed the maps, charts, diagrams and other illustrations in the SYNTOPICON and the GREAT BOOKS.

In every respect, from binding to type face, the physical construction of this unified library was designed to invite enjoyable reading and to magnify, if possible, the intrinsic value of the collection.



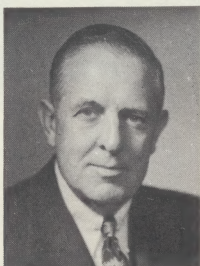
Whatever your present acquaintance with rich literature, we sincerely believe that you will find in the SYNTOPICON and GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD
a new appreciation of the literary masterpieces of the Western World...
a unique approach to a mature comprehension of ideas...
and an inexhaustible new world of reading pleasure.



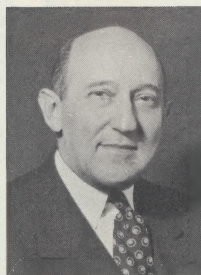
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